Oral Health in Children Fact Sheet

Healthy People 2010 Goal:

- To reduce untreated dental decay so that the proportion of children with dental caries is no more than 21% among children age 6 to 8 and no more than 15% among adolescents age 15.
- To increase to at least 50% the proportion of children who have received protective sealants on the chewing or occlusal surfaces of permanent molar teeth.

Consequences:

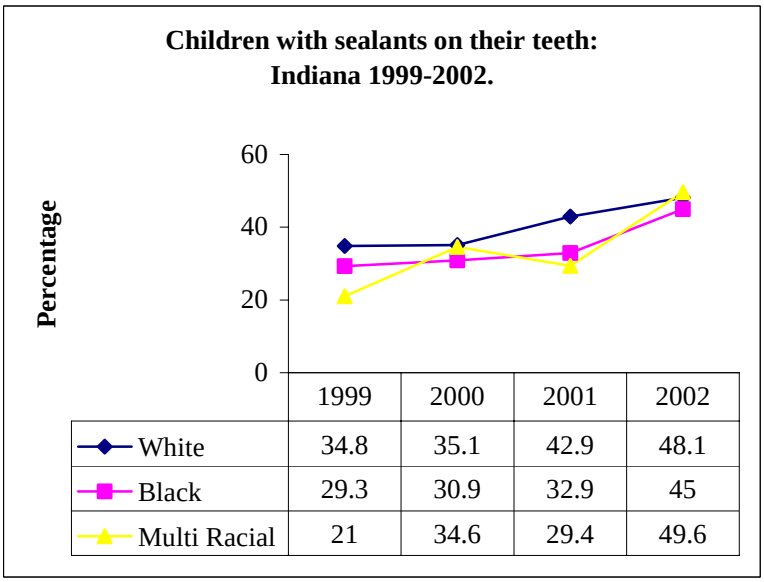
- Dental decays and dental caries result in needless pain and suffering; difficulty speaking, chewing, and swallowing; increased costs of care; loss of self-esteem; decreased economic productivity through lost work and school days; and, in extreme cases, death.

Prevalence in Indiana:

- The Indiana State Department of Health has conducted four statewide surveys to assess school children's oral health status for decayed, missing, and filled teeth (DMFT). Data from these surveys shows that the tooth decay rate in the State has declined about 70% since 1958.
- The oral health survey conducted during 2000 and 2001 in 16 Indiana counties of third graders age 8-9 indicated that 11.6% of the children had active dental decay at the time of examination.
- One area where progress has been clearly evidenced is the use of protective dental sealants. The 2002-2003 annual written dental surveys for Indiana children on their oral health indicated that 47.3% of third graders had dental sealants.

Trends in Oral Health:

- Although untreated dental decay is still a problem in Indiana children, the overall trend indicates that a profound decline in dental caries has occurred.
- The use of dental sealants is increasing across all races. Of whites in third grade, 48.1% had dental sealants in 2002-2003, compared to only 34.8% in 1999-2000. Likewise, 45% of blacks in the third grade had dental sealants in 2002-2003 when compared to only 29.3% in 1999-2000.
- Indiana is very close to reaching the Healthy People 2010 goal of 50% of the proportion of children receiving protective sealants on the chewing or occlusal surfaces of permanent molar teeth.



	1999	2000	2001	2002
White	34.8	35.1	42.9	48.1
Black	29.3	30.9	32.9	45
Multi Racial	21	34.6	29.4	49.6

Source: Oral Health, Indiana State Department of Health